

New documents link Kissinger to two 1970s coups

Release of CIA's 'Family Jewels' provides insight into political juggernaut and Bush Administration adviser.

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Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger pushed for the 1974 Turkish invasion of Cyprus and allowed arms to be moved to Ankara for an attack on that island in reaction to a coup sponsored by the Greek junta, according to documents and intelligence officers with close knowledge of the event.

Nearly 700 pages of highly classified Central Intelligence Agency reports from the 1970's, known collectively as the "Family Jewels," are slated for public release today.

However, the National Security Archive had previously obtained four related documents through the Freedom of Information Act and made them public Friday.

"In all the world the things that hurt us the most are the CIA business and Turkey aid," Kissinger declares in one of those documents, a White House memorandum of a conversation from Feb. 20, 1975. On the surface, the comment seems innocuous, but the context as well as the time period suggests Kissinger had abetted illegal financial aid and arms support to Turkey for its 1974 Cyprus invasion.

In July and August of 1974, Turkey staged a military invasion of the island nation of Cyprus, taking over nearly a third of the island and creating a divide between the south and north. Most historians consider that Kissinger - then Secretary of State and National Security Advisor to President Gerald Ford - not only knew about the planned attack on Cyprus, but encouraged it.

Some Greek Cypriots believed then, and still believe, that the invasion was a deliberate plot on the part of Britain and the US to maintain their influence on the island, which was particularly important as a listening post in the Eastern Mediterranean in the wake of the October 1973 War between Israel, Egypt, Jordan and Syria.

According to columnist Christopher Hitchens, author of the book *The Trial of Henry Kissinger*, "At the time, many Greeks believed that the significant thing was that [Prime Minister Bulent] Ecevit had been a pupil of Kissinger's at Harvard."

Several intelligence sources, who wished to remain anonymous to maintain the security of their identity, confirmed to RAW STORY that Kissinger both pushed for the Turkish invasion of Cyprus and allowed arms to be moved to Ankara.

However, a former CIA officer who was working in Turkey at the time, suggests that Kissinger's statement in the memorandum about Turkish aid likely means the Ford

administration, following Kissinger's advice, conducted business under the table with right-wing ultra-nationalist General Kenan Evren, who later dissolved Parliament and became the dictator of Turkey in a 1980 coup.

"The implication is that the US government was dealing directly with General Evren and circumventing the [democratically elected] Turkish government," the former CIA officer said. "This was authorized by Kissinger, because they were nervous about Ecevit, who was a Social Democrat."

"We technically cut off military aid for them," the officer added, referring to an arms embargo passed by Congress after the invasion. "Technically... technically, but this would imply that the military and/or probably CIA aid continued even after the aid was cut off by Congress. This may substantively be what led to the overthrow eventually of Ecevit."

According to the former CIA officer, Turkey's democratically elected President Ecevit had good relations with the Johnson administration, but the Nixon administration, where Kissinger served as National Security Advisor and Secretary of State, had issues with Ecevit.

"I don't remember now what all the issues were," the source said. "But I remember that the White House did not like Ecevit."

Kissinger could not be reached for comment Monday.

Kissinger, Rumsfeld, and Cheney, then and now

Though no longer a government official, Kissinger remains a powerful force in Washington - particularly within the Bush Administration. Dr. Kissinger was the first choice by President Bush to lead a blue ribbon investigation into the attacks of September 11, 2001. However, he resigned shortly after the 9/11 Family Steering Committee had a private meeting with him at his Kissinger and Associates Inc. New York office and asked him point blank if he had any clients by the name of Bin Laden.

According to Monica Gabrielle, who lost her husband Richard in the attacks and who was present as part of the 12-member 9/11 Family Steering Committee during the private meeting, the White House seems to have overlooked Dr. Kissinger's apparent conflict of interest.

"We had the meeting with him... the whole Steering Committee, all 12 of us. Because we are basically doing our due diligence and asking for his client list to be released to see if there was a conflict of interest between his client list and potential areas of investigation," said Gabrielle during a Tuesday morning phone conversation, recounting the events of December 12, 2002. "We went back and forth with him, discussing his client list... asking him who was on it, if there were conflicts and so forth," she continued.

"Lorie [Van Auken] asked, do you have any Saudi clients on your list? And he got a blank look. Then Lorie asked, do you have any clients by the name of Bin Laden? And he was stuttering and mumbling, and finally said he would maybe, possibly consider releasing the client list to an attorney but not for the public."

Dr. Kissinger did not reveal his client list but withdrew his name the next day without public explanation.

In Bob Woodward's *State of Denial*, Kissinger says he met regularly with Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney to offer advice about the war in Iraq. "Victory over the insurgency is the only meaningful exit strategy," Kissinger said.

Cheney, along with former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, first came to prominence during the administration of President Ford. Rumsfeld had served in various posts under Nixon before being sent to Europe as the US ambassador to NATO in 1973, a period that included the Cyprus coup. When Ford became president on August 9, 1974, immediately preceding the second wave of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, Rumsfeld returned to Washington to serve as his chief of staff, while Cheney became deputy assistant to the president.

Rumsfeld and Cheney gained increasing influence under Ford, reaching their apex of power in November 1975 with a shakeup that saw Rumsfeld installed as Secretary of Defense, Dick Cheney as White House chief of staff, and George H.W. Bush replacing William Colby as CIA director.

Together, Rumsfeld and Cheney created a bubble not unlike the one that has enveloped President George W. Bush's White House, surrounding Ford with a close knit group of advisors who worked to head off any possibility of openness about past misdeeds and to turn the administration sharply to the right.

The aid to Turkey referenced in Kissinger's cryptic remark was precisely the subject of Congressional oversight on the Executive Branch in 1974-75. In a foreshadowing of how Iran Contra would play out a decade later, the White House violated both US and international law in providing arms and financing to the Turks for the Cyprus invasion.

The CIA, through various spokespeople, would not comment on how much additional information with regard to Kissinger, the attack on Cyprus, and the events leading up to the 1980 coup in Turkey with US support would be part of the declassified documents to come out this week. The only thing the agency would say is that "this was a different CIA at a different time," and "people need to remember that."

The Chile Coup

Around the time of President Nixon's resignation in August 1974, investigative reporter Seymour Hersh started hearing accounts of illegal foreign and domestic CIA activities. On December 20, 1974, Hersh confronted CIA Director William Colby and received confirmation of everything he had learned. Two days later, Hersh went public with the story.

The Family Jewels were described in a New York Times front page article titled "Huge C.I.A. Operation Reported in U.S. Against Antiwar Forces, Other Dissidents in Nixon Years." According to Hersh, James Schlesinger, who served briefly as CIA director in 1973, had ordered the report in response to the crimes collectively known as Watergate.

Hersh's article stated, "An extensive investigation by the New York Times has established that intelligence files on at least 10,000 American citizens were maintained by a special unit of the C.I.A. that was reporting directly to Richard Helms, then the Director of Central Intelligence and now the Ambassador to Iran."

Then-CIA director William Colby's initial impulse was to reveal everything in order to give the CIA a clean slate, but President Ford and Kissinger disagreed. By January 3, 1975 when Colby was summoned to the White House for a briefing, they had decided to keep the lid on by forming a blue ribbon commission under Vice President Nelson Rockefeller.

The "memorandum of conversation" document released by the National Security Archive, dated January 4, 1975, transcribes portions of a follow-up meeting between Ford and Kissinger the next day.

Kissinger complains to President Ford about Colby's urge to come clean, saying, "You will end up with a CIA that does only reporting, and not operations ... He has turned over to the FBI the whole of his operation."

Former CIA Director Helms "said all these stories are just the tip of the iceberg," Kissinger continues, adding "If they come out, blood will flow." After offering a few examples, Kissinger concludes by remarking mysteriously, "The Chilean thing — that is not in any report. That is sort of blackmail on me."

The meaning of this remark is far from clear, suggesting as it does that the 693 pages of the Family Jewels were only "the tip of the iceberg" and that among what was left out was a "Chilean thing" that Kissinger perceived as having the potential for blackmail on himself.

It has been known since the revelations of the 70's that prior to Chile's 1970 presidential elections, President Richard Nixon, Kissinger and Helms actively pursued ways to head off the victory of leftist Salvador Allende, including sponsoring an abortive military coup.

"I don't see why we need to stand by and watch a country go Communist because of the irresponsibility of its own people," Kissinger famously said at the time.

After Allende was democratically elected and became president, the US put economic pressure on Chile and encouraged further military plots — a two-pronged strategy similar to that currently being employed against Iran — while Kissinger continued to press for stronger action.

The CIA's Directorate of Operations was particularly active in Chile in 1972-73, the period leading up to Allende's violent overthrow in September 1973 in a military coup led by General Augusto Pinochet. Following the coup, Kissinger strongly supported the new authoritarian government.

After Helms left the CIA in 1973 to become ambassador to Iran, he offered a series of vague denials when asked about CIA involvement in Chile. Among Helms' claims were "that the CIA hadn't given money directly to Allende's opponents, that the CIA didn't try to fix the vote in the Chilean Congress because investigation had shown it couldn't be arranged, that the CIA didn't try to overthrow the Chilean government because the Agency failed to find anyone who could really do it."

In 1977, Helms was convicted of perjury for his statements and given a two-year suspended sentence and a fine that was paid by his friends from the CIA. As with the more recent perjury of Vice President Cheney's former chief of staff Scooter Libby's concerning the outing of a CIA officer, Helms' had lies served the purpose of protecting his superiors, notably Kissinger.

However, in *Prelude to Terror*, historian Joseph Trento offers a somewhat different account of Helms' actions, suggesting a deeper Kissinger involvement.

“From Iran, Helms heard enough about the criminal investigation to issue a threat through his old colleague Tom Braden,” Trento writes. “Braden remembered Helms saying, ‘If I am going to be charged, then I will reveal Kissinger’s role in these operations.’” Trento adds in a footnote that “Helms himself confided to old friend and CIA colleague (from Iran) Tom Braden that he would resort to [revealing embarrassing state secrets] and ‘bring down Henry Kissinger’ in the process.”

Even apart from Trento’s assertions, Kissinger’s concern with “the Chilean thing — that is not in any report” hints at involvement in the 1973 coup. But if Trento’s claims are accurate, Kissinger might also have been referring to a threat by Helms to bring him down, both in his remark that “Helms said all these stories are just the tip of the iceberg. If they come out, blood will flow,” and in his cryptic description of “the Chilean thing” as “sort of blackmail on me.”

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